CAPTAIN GEORGE'S

Penny Dreadful

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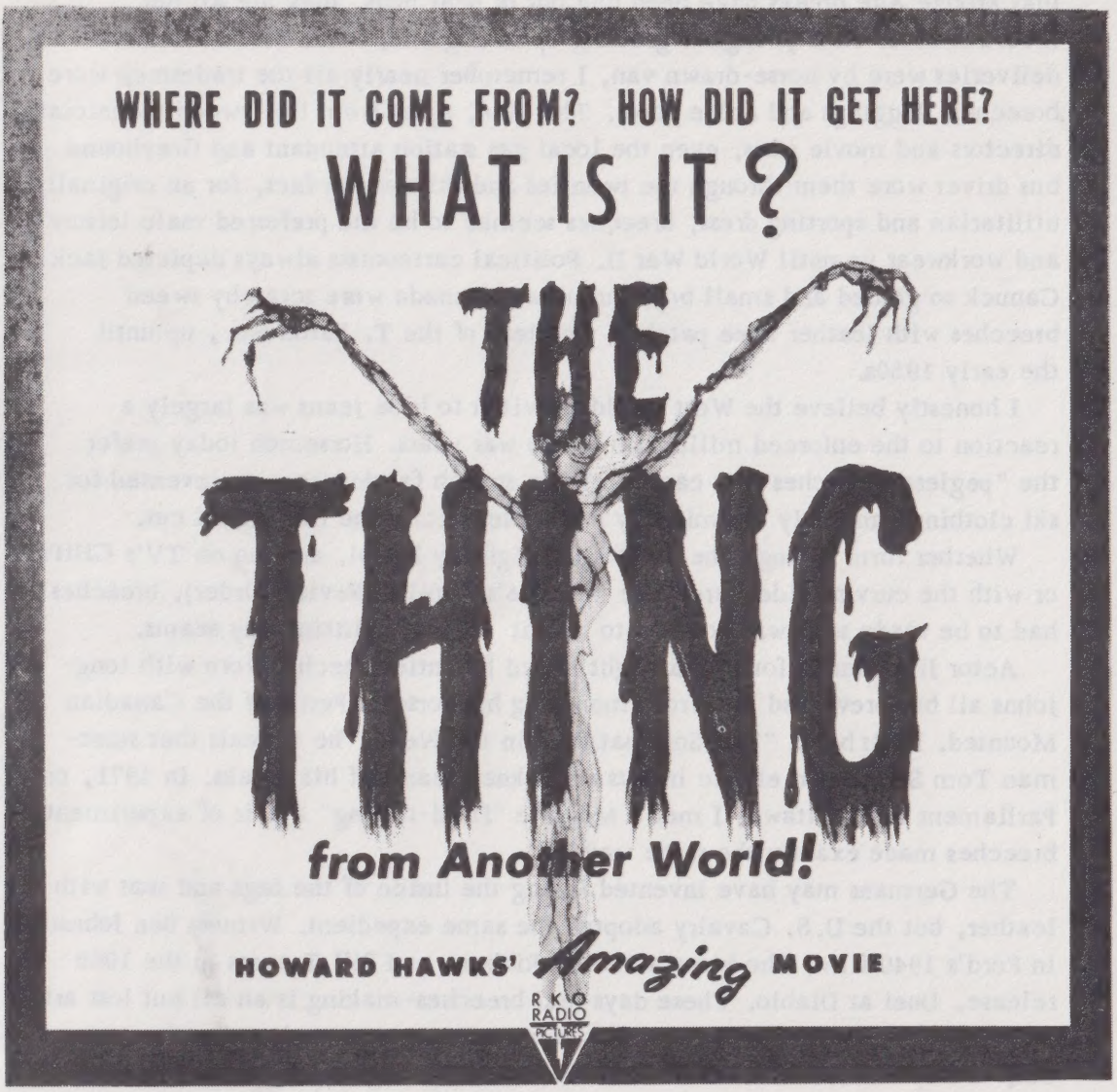
WHERE DID IT COME FROM? HOW DID IT GET HERE?
WHAT IS IT?
THE THING
from Another World!
HOWARD HAWKS' Amazing MOVIE
RKO RADIO PICTURES

A WEEKLY REVIEW

GUEST COLUMN

BY JOHN MATTHEW

Let's hear it for riding breeches! As any serial fan can attest no self-respecting hero ever looked more dashing and masculine than when he was sporting a smartly cut pair worn with gleaming riding boots. Clayton Moore and his double, the late, superb stunt athlete David Sharpe, are an excellent example in Republic's Perils of Nyoka.

We have to thank the ancient Persians for the first rudimentary riding pants made of leather. Motorcyclists still wear leathers for protection and, considering that Bronze Age breeks have been dug out of peat bogs, they are all but indestructible. As a youngster growing up in England, when bread and milk deliveries were by horse-drawn van, I remember nearly all the tradesmen wore breeches, leggings and ankle boots. This side, apart from Hollywood technicians, directors and movie stars, even the local gas station attendant and Greyhound bus driver wore them through the twenties and thirties. In fact, for an originally utilitarian and sporting dress, breeches seemed to be the preferred male leisure and workwear up until World War II. Political cartoonists always depicted Jack Canuck so garbed and small boys throughout Canada wore scratchy tweed breeches with leather knee patches, courtesy of the T. Eaton Co., up until the early 1950s.

I honestly believe the West's sudden switch to blue jeans was largely a reaction to the enforced militarism of the war years. Horsemen today prefer the "pegless" breeches that came in when stretch fabrics were re-invented for ski clothing, and only the military and police retain the traditional cut.

Whether form fitting (The California Highway Patrol, as seen on TV's CHiPs) or with the curving side flare (The Mountie's familiar Review Order), breeches had to be made so it was possible to mount without splitting any seams.

Actor Jim Bannon found that tight kneed Mountie breeches worn with long-johns all but prevented him from mounting his horse in Perils of the Canadian Mounted. In his book, "The Son that Rose in the West," he reveals that stunt-man Tom Steele had elastic inserts in the knee seams of his breeks. In 1971, on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, I met a Mountie "field-testing" a pair of experimental breeches made exactly the same way.

The Germans may have invented facing the inside of the legs and seat with leather, but the U.S. Cavalry adopted the same expedient. Witness Ben Johnson in Ford's 1949 film, She Wore a Yellow Ribbon, and Bill Travers in the 1966 release, Duel at Diablo. These days real breeches-making is an all but lost art, and skilled cutters and bespoke riding boot makers command tremendous prices. But, as anyone who watches a lot of television will agree, mankind's oldest, smartest and most practical garment is still very much in evidence.

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P-D SCRAPBOOK

Children's Radio Programmes Have Many "Hooks" For Response

Capturing youngsters' enthusiasm is effective way to build goodwill

SUGGESTIONS for advertisers planning juvenile radio programmes were detailed in MARKETING of Sept. 14th. This article will attempt to show how some successful programmes have been planned and presented with some elaboration as to the psychological aspects of various appeals for the juvenile and adolescent audience.

The thirst for adventure is a normal step in the psychological development of the child. Adventures provide an outlet for his imagination. The Lone Ranger programme sponsored by the Quaker Oats Co. Limited is a typical example of this form of radio adventure. Directed to children from seven to eleven, the Lone Ranger includes children above and below that age bracket. Even girls form a large part of this boys' programme. At this age, children have a strong tendency toward hero-worship. The courage, audacity, and quick-wittedness of the leading character unconsciously impels the child to emulation. To encourage further loyalty to the programme—and the sponsor—the audience is invited to join the Lone Ranger Club. Here another psychological factor is played upon. Children love to join clubs. It is part of an instinctive social tendency. In assisting children to make full use of this tendency, the sponsors conceived of a method which would also appeal to parents. The Lone Ranger Club is "a health and safety organization for boys and girls". Each point in the pledge which children are required to make is sure to win the approval of their mothers and fathers. The pledge also helps to win them away from "bad" tendencies common to this age, and in addition, interjects a subtle plug for the sponsor.

"My Solemn Pledge to the Lone Ranger

1. I promise not to cross any street, except at regular crossings and to first look both ways.
2. I promise to eat all the good, wholesome food my mother prepares for me—because Canada's Health Food Rules say 'Eat right—to feel right'.
3. I promise always to tell the truth.
4. I promise to be kind to birds and animals.
5. I promise not to ride on running boards and fenders of cars.
6. I promise to keep myself neat and clean, and to observe the health rules my teacher or parents give me.
7. I promise not to hitch hike or ask strangers for rides.
8. I promise to promote health and safety at all times and to encourage others to do so.
9. I promise not to cross any street against red signal lights.
10. I promise to always obey my parents or guardians.

(It is the duty of every Lone Ranger Club member to memorize and observe these promises at all times.)"

A six-page brochure distributed to club members shows young Rangers how to use and make a lariat. This employs the technique of "giving youngsters something to do". The brochure also illustrates how to tie knots, use the Lone Ranger secret code, and gives the Lone Ranger secret hand clasp. In addition, the Lone Ranger's creed is set forth—a creed worthy of Sir Lancelot himself. *Continued*

Marketing, Oct. 12, 1946

PETE HARRIS

SERIAL SKILLS: It goes without saying that Saturday matinee serial viewing was one of the greatest pleasures of growing up in the 40s. But, it could also be very discouraging to your average kid matinee-goer, because in almost every serial it seemed like everybody could do everything -- drive a car, fly a plane, fire all manner of firearms, sword-fight, run a speedboat, ride a horse, operate a short-wave radio, make a parachute jump, and so on. All very disheartening to a kid who weighed in at maybe 50 pounds, could ride a bike, climb trees, and skip stones across a pond, but not much else.

In the serials, even the women could match the skills of the men in virtually every category except fistfighting. Take Mysterious Doctor Satan, for instance. In chapter 8, not only do the two female leads -- Ella Neal and Dorothy Herbert -- prove to be capable horseback riders, but the latter goes one step further and uses trick riding to effect her escape from heavy Joe McGuinn. In chapter 11 of Spy Smasher, Eve Corby (Marguerite Chapman), held at gunpoint and abducted by heavy Tris Coffin, shows she is quick-thinking and resourceful when she leaves a coded warning by pressing down certain keys on the typewriter. In Daredevils of the Red Circle, the Red Circle who has guided the fight against the nefarious 39013, turns out to be none other than Blanche Granville (Carole Landis). Similarly, Barbara Meredith (Linda Stirling) takes over as the Black Whip when her brother (Jay Kirby) is killed. Not only could she ride and shoot like crazy, but she was an absolute ace with that bullwhip.

As for the heavies, not only could they fight like blazes, but, like everybody else, they could ride, shoot, drive, fly and sometimes even ski, and were equally expert with explosives ranging from hand grenades to aerial bombs. I've mentioned before just how resourceful George J. Lewis and Noel Cravat are as Ranga and Luge in G-Men vs. The Black Dragon. Well, they were only a small part of a contingent of heavies who gave as good as they got for 12 or 15 chapters.

It was something, I tell you, to have all this skilful activity flung in your face. Oh sure, we made a good show at pretending we could do all those things when we re-enacted each and every chapter on the way home as the Saturday evening shadows fell. But, deep down, we knew that if we were ever to have any hope of emulating our heroes, we had a long way to go to <u>really</u> acquire all the necessary skills. I mean, it was bad enough having to cope with arithmetic and geography, without the additional burden of learning how to dangle from a 500-foot cliff at the end of a weakening rope.

Well, I could go on at great length about this particular subject, but time's a-wasting and I have to go and get started on learning all that stuff.